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NEWS

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Colorado State Forest Service Announces Recipients of Economic Stimulus Funds

Note to editors: Attached to this news release is a brief description of the projects that competed successfully for Recovery Act funds. For information about a specific project, please contact the person that is listed with each project description.

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — The Colorado State Forest Service is awarding much-needed economic stimulus funds to 15 organizations and businesses that will create or retain more than 200 forestry-related jobs in Colorado between now and Sept. 30, 2011. Some of the jobs will last the entire grant period; others will be seasonal positions that perform on-the-ground work, which can be affected by the weather. Many positions funded by ARRA grants are expected to be sustained beyond the grant period.

The funds were made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The U.S. Forest Service received \$1.15 billion for forest project work nationwide and has funneled the funding to states through a competitive grant process.

The Colorado State Forest Service, an outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University, received two U.S. Forest Service grants to distribute on a competitive basis through Requests for Proposals. A \$6.25 million grant will create or retain jobs focused on implementing high-priority forest restoration and fuels mitigation projects, and strengthening Colorado's wood products industries. A second grant for \$4.465 million will help fund jobs affiliated with developing and implementing Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

The Colorado State Forest Service received 52 proposals totaling more than \$32 million. Interested organizations competed for the grants by writing project proposals, per guidelines and requirements set forth in Requests for Proposals. Interdisciplinary review panels evaluated the project proposals and selected the 15 organizations to receive Recovery Act funding.

Applicants included not-for-profit organizations, local government, private industry, forestry consultants and state agencies. Forty of the proposals requested a total of more than \$22.2 million to implement forest restoration, fuels mitigation and wood products projects. The remaining 12 proposals, totaling more than \$10.1 million, were for Community Wildfire Protection Plan development and implementation.

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Twenty Colorado counties – Boulder, Clear Creek, Delta, Denver, Dolores, Douglas, Eagle, El Paso, Gilpin, Grand, Jackson, Jefferson, La Plata, Larimer, Las Animas, Montrose, Park, Rio Grande, Routt and Teller – will receive direct benefits from stimulus funds through jobs creation and retention. In addition, neighboring counties will experience indirect benefits, as the vitality of mills impacts raw wood suppliers and companies that purchase finished product in multiple counties and sometimes in multiple states.

“We are excited to be able to provide funding that will help stimulate local economies while addressing critical forestry-related needs in Colorado,” said Jeff Jahnke, state forester and director of the Colorado State Forest Service. “These Recovery Act funds will allow the retention of current personnel and create new jobs that will implement forest restoration and wildfire mitigation projects. The funds also will help communities with efforts to develop and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plans, which ultimately will help them compete for other grant funds in the future.”

“We were pleased with the number and variety of quality proposals received, which is a testament to the commitment the applicants have not only to current and future employees, but to their desire to improve forest health and protect communities,” said Terrie Craven, ARRA program manager for the Colorado State Forest Service.

For more information about the Colorado State Forest Service ARRA grants, visit www.csfs.colostate.edu and click on CSFS Recovery Act information under quick links.

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